

Breathe *to Awaken*

**3 Yoga Breathing
Practices of
Mysore India**



BreathYoga

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WHY PRANAYAMA?

Pranayama is a composite of two Sanskrit words; ‘*Prana*’ and ‘*ayama*’. *Prana* is the universal, animating life-force energy and ‘*ayama*’ means to expand or restrain. Thus, these are breathing practices which either limit energy or expand it. To understand the difference, we need to go far back in time, to the early origins of the philosophies which pre-date the development of yoga.

Pranayama was originally an ascetic practice. It was used by the ‘Sramanas’ – a culture of wandering intellectual ascetics who lived some 2,500 years ago. The Sramana movement were men who retreated from the restrictive Brahmanic society and dropped out to live in the forests and practice meditation. They believed that an individual could find awakening by their own efforts, not just by paying Brahmins to perform rituals on their behalf and living a rule-bound existence in society.

The Sramana developed the concepts of *karma* (the law of cause-effect), *samsara* (the wheel of life, death and rebirth), and *nirvana* (extinguishing of the self) which became the basis of Buddhism, Jainism and yoga. The ascetics believed that in order to stop the process of rebirth, one must first exhaust the store of *samskara* (mental impressions) that we carry with us from life-to-life, as well as to stop the generation of new karmas. Otherwise, an impression in the mind is like a seed with a future potential for the generation of new karma. As every action and thought has a reaction, we would need to be perpetually reborn in order to receive the results of our prior actions. This was condemning the soul to a kind of imprisonment. Thus, pranayama was primarily a form of purification of past *samskara* and stopping the breath so as to still the mind. If the mind was still, no new karma would be generated and one could experience true freedom and total clarity of perception.

The practices of yoga for the next 2,000 years (or so) primarily used meditation and control of the mind to achieve a *state* of yoga. However, from around the 8th or 9th century, an emerging concept that body was a means of achieving libera-

tion or awakening arose. This was called Hatha Yoga, or the yoga of force. It consists of practices of postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayamas), locks (bandhas) and gestures (mudra) to switch on latent, dormant energies within the psycho-energetic body to achieve power and spiritual liberation. From this perspective, '*pranayama*' took on the second meaning of the word- that is breathing practices to 'expand' the life force energy.

Most of what we practice or know of pranayama comes from this period. Classical Hatha yoga texts such as the Amrita Siddhi (11th CE) Hatha Yoga Pradipika (15th CE), Shiva Samhita (15th century) and Gheranda Samhita (17th century) give some insight into what these practices were. However, if we look to these texts for clear instructions, it would be tough. They are often vague, and it would seem the texts intentionally obfuscate the instructions, so that the only real way to learn was directly through a guru.

There are many variations and philosophical differences between schools, but most schools of yoga would include various essential limbs of the practice including (or not), posture, ethics, discipline. Some would include postures, others not. Some would have ethics, others not. Without exception however, all schools of yoga from antiquity include pranayama as the *main* practice to reach the state of yoga, or union and within a multi-limbed approach it was typically performed after the practice postures and before the practice of meditation.

BNS Iyengar: The pranayama system in this course were taught by BNS Iyengar of Mysore India. He was a student of the late, great TKS Krishnamacharaya, a legendary teacher who's best known students, Sri K. Pattabhi Jois (founder of Ashtanga Vinyasa method) and BKS Iyengar (founder of Iyengar Yoga) did much to spread yoga throughout the modern world. As such these pranayama practices are part of the Ashtanga system of yoga of Mysore from a lineage through TKS Krishnamacharaya. We can assume that these practices have roots in classical Hatha yoga as some of the names, such as *Nadi Shodana*, *Shakti Chalana* and *Ujjayi* appear elsewhere however they are not taught precisely as they are here, anywhere else. At the time of this writing, BNS Iyengar continues to teach Ashtanga yoga in Mysore.

UJJAYI PRANAYAMA

Ujjayi pranayama is a Sanskrit word which means “breath of victory”. It is done by constricting the muscles in the throat to narrow the aperture of the glottis while inhaling and exhaling, thus pulling the air in through a smaller hole. It is exactly what you do when you whisper but done through the nose!

Benefits of Ujjayi Prayanama:

1. Because the air is more constricted, the diaphragm muscle, which pulls the air into the body on inhalations becomes stronger and this in turn builds strength in the core muscles. This increased core strength can help support a more aligned posture and be particularly of use when practicing body control like what one does when performing a handstand, for example.
2. It slows down the breath which means higher retention of carbon dioxide, which has many benefits including improved oxygen absorption, a calmer nervous system, and possible healing of habits of chronic overbreathing.
3. The sound produced by ujjayi pranayama can become a calming focal point for the mind allowing a turning inwards of the senses for meditation
4. Gives enhanced control over the length of the breath and as such, is a pre-requisite tool for the practice of advanced pranayamas such as taught in this course where it is essential to breathe in time with specific ratios

You can practice ujjayi breathing as much as you want, wherever you want. Try to make the sound of your breath only lightly audible and smooth sounding. You may find that it is initially easier to practice ujjayi on your exhalation as this takes no effort on the part of your diaphragm. Keep practicing until you can do both a smooth, long inhalation and exhalation!

BREATH, ENERGY AND PURIFICATION

In this section we look at the broader theme of personal change, awakening and the role of pranayama. The model of the human psyche proposed here is that our innermost self is consciousness and that this can be understood through direct experience.

The goal of yoga practice is to achieve a state of ‘yoga’, a state of higher realization where one’s sense-of-self merges with the infinite consciousness within. The yogi’s ego mind becomes silent and experiences his or herself as pure God consciousness. This is often explained using different metaphors like, the mind being like clouds and the consciousness is the vast sky. Or our consciousness is like a clear body of water but the thoughts of the mind create ripples on the surface and make it impossible to see through to the bottom.

Through pranayama, we can make the surface of the water still so we can see all the way through. We can blow away the clouds covering the vast sky. Or as Patanjali wrote, “remove the veil which covers the inner light”.

However, because we have *samskara* (past impressions and trauma), we can have an experience of inner light and then get pulled back out again. However, the more we experience the inner light, the more these impressions dissolve, giving way to greater freedom. In this way we become less attached, not needing the world to be anything other than what it is because we experience deep bliss that arises from within us as it really is who you are most fundamentally.

The practice reveals or uncovers that which is already within us. We ‘awaken’ to our own bliss consciousness which has been with us from the beginning. This suggests that when one feels less than, or not good enough, that this is an error

in perception. However, our minds tend to identify more with suffering and limitation because the samskara block us from looking inwards. We forget that who we really are is God consciousness and instead look outwards for our happiness.

Samskara thus act as a kind of unconscious, mechanical pull that we are seldom aware are coloring our perception. The Sramanas goal was to flush out samskaras through pranayama so that one could be free from the bondage of the mind. The more these tendencies of the mind are cleansed through practice, the more we will experience our energy flowing and through this, our higher energy centers awaken.

While these concepts might seem foreign, breathwork in its various forms do help people in this way. Therapists effectively use breath practices to help people to heal from trauma and let go of the charge around past memories which are our modern way of talking about the same thing.

POSTURE AND BANDHA

As mentioned in the video, bandha are a highly nuanced subject that can take some many years of practice to even find, let alone perfect. Practice following the guidelines as well as the visualization exercises presented in the video and consider taking up a regular and focused practice of yoga taught by an experienced teacher. Message me if you have specific questions!

Posture:

There are several classical yoga postures recommended for the practice of pranayama and meditation as described in the video. You may also choose to lay down or stand up. Laying down has some potential problems with it because you might become too relaxed and lose the upward traction along your spine. The easiest among the seated postures (sukhasana) is not the most ideal but will be a decent place to start. Simply sit up on a hard surface to elevate your hips and cross your legs on the floor in front of you. Sitting on a soft support is not ideal as it makes it hard to rally the kind of feedback that helps us perform our bandha.

Bandha:

There are three main bandha, or “locks” that are used in the practice:

Mula Bandha: the “root” lock. This is a contraction of a complex of muscles in the pelvic floor and is used to redirect the downward flow of energy upwards so that the energy can be used to pierce or awaken the chakras located along the spine. There are three similar practices in the same region:

Vajroli Mudra: contraction of the urethra to create a kind of suction feeling

Ashwini Mudra: contraction of the anus

Mula Bandha: contraction of the perineum

You may notice that when you contract the anus fully (Ashwini Mudra) that everything in the pelvic floor tenses. Perhaps this is why K. Pattabhi Jois (founder of

Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga method) when asked about mula bandha would simply say “squeeze your anus”. It could have been that his English vocabulary was not sufficient but it would seem that Mula Bandha is more subtle. It is in the middle between the genitals (Vajroli Mudra) and the anus (Ashwini Mudra). Perhaps the clearest way I can teach it in this medium is as described in the video: keep a curve in your lower back while pulling the navel in and up. Make sure it is the lower navel, below your belly button, which can be challenging to engage properly.

Uddiyana Bandha: the ‘flying upwards’ lock. This practice assists the upwards movement of the energy continuing on from the action in mula bandha. There are two forms of this practice. One done after a full exhalation:

- Take several deep, quick breaths to lower the CO2 level in your blood
- Forcefully exhale out as much air as you can
- Lean forward, push your arms straight and your hands into your knees
- Make a fake inhale where the chest expands but no air comes in. This should create a vacuum which pulls the organs up inside your ribcage.
- Hold your breath out while applying the other bandhas

The other form of Uddiyana Bandha is done while holding the breath inside the lungs. Because the lungs here are fully expanded, it is impossible to fully pull the organs up as described in the practice above! Instead simply pull the lower navel in and up as much as you can while still holding the breath.

Jalandhara Bandha: the lock of the ‘net bearer’. Named as such because looks like what a fisherman might do when fixing his or her net, holding the net between his or her chin and chest. Jalandhara bandha has a lot of nuance to it which is best learned in person with an experienced teacher because a person’s head, neck and shoulders are often areas of tension and unconscious habits of misalignment and the instructions can be easily misunderstood.

Jalandhara Bandha seals the top of an energetic container where Mula Bandha is the bottom. By pulling the energy up with mula bandha and uddiyana bandha, it then gets compressed back down at the top with Jalandhara Bandha. In this way, the two forces of the upward rising energy (udana) and the downward moving energy (apana) meet at the navel, creating a transformative merging of polar forces.

I practice and teach my students a subtle, gentler form of Jalandhara as an action of hollowing the throat and lifting the sternum. Make sure you are lifting the *sternum* not the chin! The three bandhas, Mula, Uddiyana and Jalandhara are to be particularly applied while holding the breath. However, if using the bandha

interferes with your breathing, make the breathing your priority and only focus on bandha and energy work once you have the basics down solidly.

Mudra

Literally a “seal”. Mudras are an entire subject into themselves, and there can be an unclear line about what a mudra versus a bandha versus an asana. Essentially, they are psycho-physical positions which have symbolic and attitudinal meaning as well as being a technology to direct energy flow. There are mudras of the hands, eyes, body and even the attitude or expression. Here we are using hand mudras.

Right hand in mudra: the right hand is used to change the flow of breath. This is called the ‘Vishnu Mudra’. The thumb closes the right nostril, and the ring finger closes the left nostril. The index finger and middle finger are not used. You may tuck these back against the palm or experiment with touching the tips of these fingers to the place between your eyebrows (broomadhya). It is suggested that this can be an aid to awakening the sixth chakra, the “third eye” which is the psychic center located in the middle of your brain above the roof of your mouth. When positioning the thumb to close the right nostril and the ring finger to close the left nostril, think of it like playing a musical instrument. Be refined in how you control the breath. Gently press the tips of these digits into the flesh along the bridge of your nose, not bluntly covering the hole itself.

Left hand to help you count: if you need sensorial feedback to remind yourself which count you are on, then you will want to use this hand to help you count. The more pranayama we do, we can tend to space out and lose track of the count and the left hand can help you here. In the video I show how to use the thumb of your left hand to trace the digits of your fingers. The tip of the thumb moves from the middle phalange of the ring finger as “one” to the bottom phalange as “two” and over to the bottom phalange of the pinky finger as “three” and so on.

Left hand in mudra: You connect the tip of the thumb to the tip of the ring finger and either turn the hand up so the back of the hand rests on the knee (Chin Mudra) or place the palm down to rest on the knee (Jnana Mudra). The Chin Mudra is used to indicate a more open temperament while the Jnana Mudra is perhaps a bit more solid or grounded. Both versions are said to direct the energy that comes out of the index finger and loop it back into the body. The symbolic meaning is that the ego is represented by the index finger (because it points), the thumb represents God and we join them together. Some schools of yoga tuck the index finger underneath the thumb to show submission to God. Experiment with whichever you like.

PRANAYAMA AND LIFESTYLE

Here we discuss broad injunctions as it comes to yoga and pranayama. Most all ancient systems of yoga come with auxiliary considerations of how one should live one's life in terms of personal disciplines and ethics. In the 8-limbed yoga of Patanjali, these include non-violence, truth, not stealing, non-grasping (at what one doesn't need) and consciousness around sexual energy. These injunctions keep one from accumulating more 'bad' karmas which can be an impedance to meditation and the ultimate goal of yoga and/or nirvana. We cannot separate our lives from our practice if we want any meaningful advancement. This is why a serious practice of yoga and pranayama is a holistic discipline. Here I give a few areas for you to consider:

- 1. Food:** what you eat and how much you eat matters, obviously. Try to be moderate in your consumption.
- 2. Discipline:** commit to the practice at a level which is consistent and sustainable over time.
- 3. Rest:** Following your practice, rest on your back in the corpse pose for at least a few minutes
- 4. Mind:** the words you use with yourself (internal dialogue) and others shapes reality and experience. Do not use your words to undermine yourself, even as a joke.

RATIO, COUNT AND ADVANCING

In this video we discuss key mechanics of the practice- the ratio of the pranayamas and how to set the right timing of what you work with. The ratios are set rules, the count is what you take responsibility for.

Ratio: this describes the relationship between the length of the time between the inhale, exhale, and hold or in the case of Shakti Chalana, it describes the relationship between breaths on the right, the hold, and breaths on the left.

Vishama Vritti/ Nadi Shodana Ratio: 1:2:1 This shows one full cycle of breath. The first 1 represents the inhalation, the second 2 represents the hold time (as being double in time) and the third 1 represents the exhalation. Example: breathe in on the right for 5 counts, hold for 10 counts, breathe out for 5 counts

Shakti Chalana: 1:4:2 This also shows one full cycle of the pranayama. Here the first 1 represents all breaths done through the right nostril. The 4 represents a 4x time hold. The 2 represents all breaths done through the left nostril.

1:4:2 ratio is a classic, penultimate ratio described in Hatha texts and it is quite a challenging level to get to.

When pranayamas include an external hold (bahir kumbhaka), that is, a suspension of breathing done after the exhalation and before the inhalation, this ratio might be depicted as having four numbers. For example: 1:2:1:.5 where 1 represents the inhalation, 2 represents the inner hold, 1 represents the exhalation and .5 represents the time holding the breath out before inhaling. In this way, there are many possibilities with different ratios in pranayama practice but to dive into modifying ratios should be done only after mastering the basics and the internal hold (antara kumbhaka).

Count: As mentioned above, the count is what you have to take responsibility for and there is some arbitrariness of what makes a measure of time. You can use seconds, beats from a metronome, beats from your heart (if you can detect

it), a mantra or your own internal counting in a rhythm. Obviously the faster the rhythm, the quicker you breathe and the easier it becomes. Count slower and it becomes more demanding. That's why ratio is going to be more of your focus than count although this is an important metric by which you 'advance' in your practice.

I personally use a metronome and I set it to my resting heart rate (around 64 beats) and find that this works well for me.

After you find the way you keep measure of time, experiment to find the right count for you. Using the count while you breathe, experience how it feels for you to breathe in to the count of 5. How is 7? 10? 12? If the breath starts to rush in or rush out, if you feel a sense of panic or urgency then you are pushing yourself too far and need to either speed up the rhythm or reduce the count. The ratio however, stays the same, either 1:2:1 or 1:4:2 in the case of Shakti Chalana.

You might try beginning your practice of Vishama Vritti at a count of 7:14:7. If that is challenging, do 5:10:5. Or move up to 10:20:10. The final count for both the Nadi Shodana and Vishama Vritti is 12:30:12 which is adding six counts to the hold time when the ratio is 1:2:1. You should be comfortably able to do several rounds of Nadi Shodana or Vishama Vritti at a count of 12:30:12 *before* attempting the Shakti Chalana.

Advancing: mastering these pranayamas are self-evaluated by two criteria: the count you use while adhering to the ratio and the comfort level you feel. The science of it is that we are training our nervous systems to become less sensitive to carbon dioxide. The more sensitive one is to carbon dioxide, the more urge a person has to breathe. Training our breath to slow down, and hold the breath allows us to decrease the urge to breathe, leading to less frequent breaths overall which is a positive thing for health and mental wellbeing. The more you practice pranayama, you are literally conditioning your nervous system to accept more CO₂. This may take weeks or months. Be patient. Be gentle with yourself. Only move at a pace which allows you to be lightly challenged, not stressed. To explore more on how to use breathing and breath holds to affect our carbon dioxide sensitivity and how this can benefit the health, I encourage you to take my 'Breathe to Energize' course which describes this in detail.

INTRODUCTION TO VISHAMA VRITTI

Vishama Vritti means “the unequal ratio” and is the first of the three pranayamas taught in this system. This and Nadi Shodana are the purificatory pranayamas and must be mastered to a level of 12/30/12 count before moving on to Shakti Chalana practice. Your first assignment is to master Vishama Vritti at least in the sense that you know how to do it and can perform one round without any doubt or confusion. For this, practice this pranayama exclusively for at least three days before moving on to Nadi Shodana. There are many ways you can visualize energy in these practices. Generally, as you inhale and hold the breath, visualize energy moving up your spine towards the crown. If you know the position and meaning of your chakras, you can direct energy to work with them. As you exhale, either energy moves back down the spine or can be exhaled out as a continuing purification exercise.

Before each round of any of these pranayamas, do the purification breath. There are 6 breath holds in each round.

Always practice on an empty stomach.

VISHAMA VRITTI

ONE ROUND:

Purification Breath:

Inhale both, exhale both

Inhale both, exhale left

Vishama Vritti:

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale right 7, Pause

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale right 7, Pause

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale **left** 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale left 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale left 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale **right** 7

Inhale both, exhale both

Practice 1-10 rounds

*Always follow with some rest in the corpse pose (savasana) for a few minutes

INTRODUCTION TO NADI SHODANA

Nadi Shodana means “purification of the energy channels” and is a well-known pranayama. You might experience this one as being more balancing than the Vishama Vritti. Similarly, once you have mastered Vishama Vritti over a period of at least three days, you will next spend time learning only this one. Once this process is complete and you can switch, at will, between either pranayamas and not get confused, then it will be entirely up to you which one you pick. The advice is to pick ONE for any particular day of practice. Not to do a little Vishama Vritti and a little bit of Nadi Shodana, but just one a day.

How do you pick? Once you know these two pranayamas, you will feel how they affect you and what you prefer. You may get intuition that Vishama Vritti is suitable for you on one day but on another it may be the Nadi Shodana. In the bigger, longer scope of a practice which includes Shakti Chalana, these two pranayamas are your preparation.

Before each round of any of these pranayamas, do the purification breath. There are 6 breath holds in each round.

Always practice on an empty stomach.

NADI SHODANA

ONE ROUND:

Purification Breath:

Inhale both, exhale both

Inhale both, exhale left

Nadi Shodana:

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale left 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale right 7, Pause

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale left 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale right 7, Pause

Inhale right 7, Hold 14, Exhale left 7, Pause

Inhale left 7, Hold 14, Exhale right 7

Inhale both, exhale both

Practice 1-10 rounds

*Always follow with some rest in the corpse pose (savasana) for a few minutes

INTRODUCTION TO SHAKTI CHALANA

Shakti is type of energy and the has a feminine connotation. Chalana means to “stir”. There are other practices which are not pranayamas which are also called Shakti Chalana. Some of various means by which yogis along throughout the centuries have used the body to lift the Kundalini energy up the spine and awaken our consciousness into realization or nirvana are also called Shakti Chalana.

One noteworthy version of Shakti Chalana in a hatha text involves gripping the tongue with your hands and violently shaking the tongue back and forth until the Kundalini rises. But this is not what we are doing here obviously! Kundalini is an concept in Hatha Yoga that we have dormant spiritual energy in the base of our spine, waiting to be awakened. Once it does, it rises up the spine like a striking snake and creates a dramatic, sudden spiritual liberation. In the *Krishnamacharya* tradition, which is what is being presented here, Kundalini is considered as a block to the energy whereas in other traditions, Kundalini is coaxed through various means (mantra, pranayamas, asanas, mudras, bandhas, etc) to arise. The nuances of this are beyond what we can cover here but nonetheless, the Shakti Chalana is considered as a practice to awaken Kundalini energy.

Only approach this when you have Nadi Shodana and Vishama Vritti down solidly and comfortable with a 12-30-12 count. Unless you are on the longer 48 day ‘Upasana’ program (discussed below) you would first do at least 3 rounds of either Vishama Vritti or Nadi Shodana before doing Shakti Chalana. One round of Shakti Chalana is shorter and has only two breath holds per round. The ratio is 1:4:2 where ‘1’ represents both the inhale and exhale on the right nostril, ‘4’ represents the hold and ‘2’ is the inhale and exhale on the left nostril. Start with a comfortable count and work upwards until you get to 12:48:24 at which point you may decide to advance to the Upasana level.

SHAKTI CHALANA

ONE ROUND:

- Purification Breath:

Inhale both, exhale both

Inhale both, exhale left

- Shakti Chalana:

Inhale right 7, Hold 28, Exhale left 14, Pause

Inhale left 14, Hold 28, Exhale right 7, Pause

Inhale both, exhale both

Practice 1-10 rounds

*Always follow with some rest in the corpse pose (savasana) for a few minutes

SHAKTI CHALANA FULL PRACTICE:

- Some type of preparatory physical practice ie; a well-rounded yoga practice
- 3-5 rounds of either Vishama Vritti or Nadi Shodana
- 1-10 rounds of Shakti Chalana
- Meditation and Savasana

UPASANA INTENSIVE

48 DAY PRACTICE

If you have practiced the full Shakti Chalana practice regularly for several months, you may consider taking on the ultimate step with this; the Upasana. This is an intensive program of twice daily practices of 10 rounds of only Shakti Chalana (no other pranayamas are used as preparation) each day for 48 days. BNS Iyengar described this as the practice to do if you really want to go into the very deep, mystical end of transformative pranayama practice. If you miss a day or don't hit the target of 10 rounds a session, two sessions a day, then you must begin again! This is a practice for the adventurous soul who is ready for something intense and profound! If you decide this is something that you do want to take on, please prepare yourself physically and mentally. Think of this as running a marathon- you would not do a marathon if you were only a light jogger. Rather you'd need to run, daily in increasing distances to be ready for it. You will want to have a clean diet, get off of any recreational drugs and try to ween yourself off any anti-depressants or anti-anxiety type of medications before beginning.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO 'BREATHE TO AWAKEN'?

In the yoga sutra of Patanjali, a seminal text on yoga from the 2nd century BCE, the practice of pranayama is described as gradually being able to reveal the inner light inside a person by removing 'the veil' (of ignorance and delusion):

"Through pranayama the veil of that which covers the inner illumination or light is thinned, diminishes and vanishes"

-Yoga Sutra of Patanjali 2:52

Breath practices have the potential to do this if you maintain a regular practice. In this video I discuss the phenomenon of how a person can start off with an intention to improve, rise, make a change, awaken, etc yet slip back to old ways of being, even if those ways of being are suboptimal or less desirable. This kind of oscillation between the ideal self and the self that seeks change can be a strong force to overcome and as a result, many people don't end up making the changes that they want.

One common way that people will attempt change is to swing too hard into what they think of as the ideal behaviors but do so in such an exaggerated way that it is unsustainable. For example, going from living an unhealthy lifestyle of many years and one day, joining a gym, swearing off the booze, waking up early and really going for it. More often than not, this is unsustainable, and they end up swinging back into their starting position, back to their old behaviors.

In the interest of stealthily creating sustainable change over time, do a small amount of practice regularly. Let it become a habit and then build up the intensity slowly over time, so your brain creates new pathways.

Breathing is mostly an unconscious and automated behavior. For the majority of people on the planet, breathing will only be an unconscious function, for their entire lives. What a shame to miss such a valuable tool for growth, literally right under our own nose. But when you make what was unconscious, conscious, it opens doorways for change and insight, on many levels.

May your ongoing practice bring a gradual awakening which will allow you to find real beauty and joy within yourself.

Namaste.

Please reach out if you have any questions and again, thank you so much for being on Breathe to Awaken!